



ILLINOIS PORK PRODUCERS
ASSOCIATION

July 18, 2000

Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Action Plan (4503F)
c/o U S Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20460

On behalf of the Illinois Pork Producers Association membership, I appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments. This letter is in support of the position that the state of Illinois has taken on issues discussed at the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico watershed Nutrient Task Force meetings.

At the Mississippi River/Gulf of Mexico Task Force Meeting on June 15 and 16, Joe Hampton, Director of the Illinois Department of Agriculture, stated that Illinois could not support numeric goals for the reduction of annual nitrogen loading in the Gulf of Mexico. We strongly agree with that statement.

There are many unanswered questions that have been raised by the scientific community regarding the hypoxia area in the gulf. We have concerns with many of the biased assumptions stated in the Integrated Assessment conducted by the federal Committee on Environment and Natural Resources and therefore with the Action Plan that is based on that assessment.

We feel that before any decisions are made or standards set on issues such as this one, efforts must be made to locate and use all relevant, scientific data. We encourage decisions based on sound, scientific information.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,


Jeff Galle, President
Illinois Pork Producers Association